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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **DAVY  
PROCESS TECHNOLOGY LIMITED** [GB/GB]; 20  
Eastbourne Terrace, London W2 6LE (GB).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **BACKES, Adrian,**  
Francis [GB/GB]; 20 Eastbourne Terrace, London W2  
6LE (GB). **HILES, Andrew, George** [GB/GB]; 20 East-  
bourne Terrace, London W2 6LE (GB). **SUTTON, David,**  
Mark [GB/GB]; 20 Eastbourne Terrace, London W2 6LE  
(GB).

(74) Agent: **SMAGGASGALE, Gillian, Helen;** W.P. Thomp-  
son & Co, 55 Drury Lane, London WC2B 5SQ (GB).

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ning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: PROCESS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF ETHERS

(57) Abstract: A process for the production of an ether optionally with a diol and/or a lactone, by reaction of a corresponding organic feed material selected from unsaturated dicarboxylic acids and/or anhydrides, mono-esters of unsaturated dicarboxylic acids and/or anhydrides, diesters of unsaturated dicarboxylic acids and/or anhydrides, unsaturated lactones, and mixtures of two or more thereof in the presence of hydrogen which comprises the steps of-(a)supplying a stream comprising at least a portion of the organic feed material to a pre-reactor zone comprising catalyst and operating under reaction conditions and contacting said feed with a hydrogen containing stream such that at least some of the carbon carbon double bonds are saturated;(b)vaporising the at least partly saturated feed into the hydrogen containing stream in a vaporising zone;(c)supplying the hydrogen-containing stream containing the vaporised at least partially saturated feed to a reaction zone comprising catalyst and operating under reaction conditions; (d)recovering from the reaction zone a product stream comprising the ether and optionally diol and/or lactone; and (e)recycling depleted hydrogen-containing stream to at least the pre-reactor zone or the vaporisation zone.

WO 2005/058855 A1